

Growth Policy Update Comments from the 2019 Home Builders Show & Lifestyle Expo Booth

Total number of comments - 205

Identified as living or owning property in the City - 100

Identified as living outside the City - 83

Comments just related to county - 22

The comments have been divided into the following general groups:

Transportation

Housing

Development

Lifestyle

Other

*The * mark indicates a respondent agreed with that comment but did not write their own comment
[] indicates words added to clarify a comment*

People Identified as Living in the CITY

Transportation

- Need walking trails and boulevard [sidewalks] on the upper east side
- Need more flights
- Construct pedestrian path along 11th Avenue to facilitate safety
- Cruise Avenue should be decreased to 1[one] lane or remove all together
- More sidewalks and pedestrian friendly areas
- Need a city by-pass; bringing highway traffic through town really needs to change
- Lack of turn lanes/center lanes etc. on main streets.
- We live on Benton Ave.; people speed way too much - we need a speed hump
- Request traffic calming on North Benton north of the county shops - also Obsidian, Flagstone and Andesite in Stone Meadows subdivision
- We need street lighting; our whole area is dark at night – Birch Street; sidewalks too
- Street lights are important for safety, set up more lighting so [you] can walk in the city; can still keep dark skies
- Westside needs sidewalks/consistency between patchwork city/county properties *
- More sidewalks, need to be able to walk with a stroller, sidewalks are broken and uneven on the west side
- Sidewalks, lighting, and move [parking] cars off the streets.
- Sidewalks in all city neighborhoods
- A train over/under pass Benton or Montana Avenue or both *****
- Having to stop for trains on main roads
- More parking downtown
- More parking around St. Peters Hospital
- Custer Avenue traffic round about?
- Fix Custer Avenue*
- Widen Custer Avenue to 5 lanes
- Increase availability to include weekend routes for city busses
- Implement program to allow homeowners to contract with city to snowplow alleys

- Bus stop on Cleveland: can they add a garbage can and work with the landowner to keep it cleaner
- Better public transportation: more routes & stops, include the valley
- Public transportation options are very important
- Better snow removal***
- Thanks for good snow removal in a prompt manner
- Excellent plowing this year
- Some of the smaller city streets could be plowed more often; cars are stuck on the streets still.
- Clean streets more frequently to improve air quality

Housing

- More housing in Padbury Ranch
- Provide public toilet and shower facilities to assist the homeless population
- More affordable housing
- More housing
- More residential opportunities downtown
- Affordable starter homes *
- Promote affordable housing for low-to-moderate income people including people not making a livable wage

Development

- Move the sewer plant to behind the MT HPA (Montana Law Enforcement Academy)
- Create a park district for the county to contribute to the development and maintenance of parks
- Job creation and retention
- Density - walkable neighborhoods
- Businesses are closing
- Capital Mall is an eyesore
- Need a convention center in town
- The city is hard to work with when it comes to development
- I am very happy w/the downtown improvement district; seeing Last Chance grow again is awesome
- More business development
- Expand water and sewer
- Retail on ground floor of downtown buildings
- When they redo the mall (?) landscaping
- Need shopping – clothes, home [ware], etc.
- Let's come up with a way to buy the Whyte land in west Helena; if it's developed we lose a valuable outdoor space
- Don't look like Billings, better utilize the property within city limits. Grow up not grow out
- More restaurants, shops, downtown/walking mall
- Less signage

Lifestyle

- Promote uses that encourage people to get out and socialize such as restaurants
- Like the parks and trails in the city – great for running
- Like the golf course

- Great parks
- Need a performing arts space for concerts/events [that is] larger than the Myna, smaller than the Civic Center*
- Support the Helena Regional Sport Association (HRSA) and YMCA effort to rebuild the existing YMCA into a \$40 M multi-sport complex – feasibility study and preliminary engineering report are completed – HRSA Board Member
- Downtown is awesome
- Like the older buildings and downtown – like the parades and activities; miss the Marlow Theater
- Like the people and attitudes [of the people in Helena]
- Indoor entertainment like arcades or obstacle courses
- Dogs are a big nuisance at the Farmers Market; too many dogs!
- Open space and trails are what I like most about the city.
- Continue to integrate parks, bike trails, greenways to support pedestrian & cyclists & general healthy lifestyles
- Like trails that have been installed *
- The open space around Helena has been the most impactful initiative that we have seen. For the health and well-being of our community, it is of utmost value!
- Way finding important, Centennial Trail great
- [I like] public art, I want our fountain back

Other

- Would like to see an entrance sign on the west side [of the city] to beautify the corridor *
- Limit casinos to a district – do not allow casinos built throughout the city
- City seems to neglect the neighborhood between Montanan Avenue, golf course, and south of Custer; a neighborhood plan might help
- Climate change resilience for our community – resistance to change – adaptation to change
- Increase wildlife corridors through the city – to begin to address above [climate change resilience]
- Too many transients downtown; also need to find resources to help them
- Trim the trees [by] Lawrence and Monroe
- Cars parking on the street and irresponsible pet owners
- Love all the green trees & mature landscaping in the city
- Water and sewer a plus
- Work with the County on growth
- 18 year resident – born in ND but never leaving Helena!
- People don't move away because of the community; they move away because of the weather
People also move here for the weather. Nurture local businesses, nurture companies that support Montana way of life. Don't listen to Californians. I just moved from there because of these crappy politicians that followed us in. They're blind

People Identified as Living in the COUNTY

Transportation

- Traffic is a problem
- Traffic on 282 needs to be slower

- Don't use salt on the roads for ice
- Parking is a problem downtown, circle around [looking for parking], machines do not take \$1, intersections are crazy
- More trails especially bike trails**
- Please be more proactive in street design to accommodate traffic flow before it becomes a major issue! *
- How does the City define what constitutes snow removal? Does it mean completely free of snow and ice?
- Roads/streets are plowed better this year
- More signaled cross walks, pedestrians take their lives into their hands crossing major streets.
- Protected bike lanes; more bike paths *****
- More sidewalks for pedestrians around school zones
- Beautification of entrances to the city
- More bike paths along main transportation corridors not just for recreation; to be used as a transportation option
- Fix "Malfunction Junction" on Montana Ave.
- Develop a walking or bike path down Green Meadow to Lincoln Road and Montana to Lincoln Road
- Replace parallel parking on Last Chance Gulch Blvd. downtown to angle-in parking on one side of road. Increases speed of parking and clearing over parallel parking
- Airport Road needs improving**
- Parking on the street a problem especially w/the snow
- Need a turn lane on Montana Avenue and widen
- Have you ever considered even-odd days for plowing streets – allow parking on one side & then reverse
- Raising [parking] meter rate just pushes buyers from downtown
- Maintenance of dirt roads
- Railroad crossing a problem not sure what can be done *
- I like the bike trails especially the one by the Fort, use them a lot

Housing

- More multi-family projects/lots available with city services, higher density reduces urban sprawl and makes housing more affordable
- How does the City plan to help homeowners to improve existing old & dilapidated properties
- Affordable housing
- Cheap government subsidized housing perpetuates wealthy using labor instead of paying a living wage. Low income rental creates no buy-in; renting is no benefit for families like home ownership **

Development

- Raingarden/drainage retrofit and in new construction
- Fill in empty lots downtown
- A real shopping mall
- More design features – not just box for buildings
- Helena definitely needs more retail investment as well as an infrastructure update
- More indoor fun stuff for young people ages 5 – up

- Building too much around city for infrastructure - wells drying up, traffic getting to be a problem
- As the city grows so should essential services [fire, police, emergency services]*
- Redeveloped Capital Mall area
- Flood mitigation
- Too many regulations in the city; that's why people don't build here
- Keep the city in the city; don't expand to the valley
- Would like to see more shopping and popular dining options
- I would love to see more restaurants i.e. Olive Garden, Red Lobster, Seafood
- More restaurants in city **
- Less expensive infrastructure for city subdivisions and I will build several
- Less casinos
- Not enough local businesses, spruce up 11th and Prospect
- No more housing in open spaces! Will look very crowded, love the country side look.
- As we grow, please prepare for flooding
- City taxes too high, some way to tax county who use city services

Lifestyle

- We need a roller skating rink
- Protect Mt. Helena, enhance and enlarge open space
- The parks are awesome in the town. The people are very friendly
- Helicopter noise from the Fort an issue

Other

- I love Helena – grew up outside the city
- Thank you for trying to improve the area
- More support for renewable energy
- Waste water treatment plant very bad aroma when driving by, offensive to visitors
- Clean up parks
- Not enough land for what we like
- God's Love attracts people
- Some type of incentive to make people want to clean up, [improve] curb appeal
- School lunch debt
- I think it is a great idea that the City is at the Home Show because more houses are going up in the Valley*
- Hands-on work projects for high schoolers
- Transfer station is working well, great staff, good hours
- Nobody knows where city limits are
- I would like to see not so many panhandlers on every street corner *

County specific comments:

- Plan subdivisions better in the county, Canyon Ferry Road, concerned about water table w/all the new subdivisions, roads for fire safety*
- Develop a walking or bike path down Green Meadow to Lincoln Road and Montana to Lincoln Road
- Valley needs better drainage for storm water *****
- Improve Valley Drive East Helena
- County Sewer District & Water District
- Live in the county – have had water problems; ran out of shower and drinking water. County not plowing local roads adequately
- Flood zone upgrade being charged more, we should see progress.
- Please stop building in the flood zones; it's just an invitation to flood homes, “emergencies”, and distress for the entire community
- No growth near Green Meadow – Woodland Hills area
- County needs zoning for development to have neighborhoods with compatible land uses *
- Larger lots to protect water quality and availability
- Clean the borrow pits of weeds and clean culverts